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A
DIRECTORY
OF
Church-government.

Anciently contended for, and as
farre as the Times would suffer, practised
by the first Non-conformists in the daies of
Queen ELIZABETH.

Found in the study of the most accomplished
Divine, Mr. *Thomas Cartwright*, after his decease;
and reserved to be published for
such a time as this.

Published by Authority.

LONDON,
Printed for *John Wright* in the Old-baily,
1644.

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T H E
S A C R E D D I S C I P L I N E
of the C H U R C H, described in
the Word of God.



The Discipline of Christs Church that is necessary for all times is delivered by Christ, and set downe in the holy Scriptures. Therefore the true and lawfull Discipline is to be fetched from thence, and from thence alone. And that which resteth upon any other foundation ought to be esteemed unlawfull and counterfeit.

Of all particular Churches there is one and the same right order and forme: Therefore also no one may challenge to it selfe any power over others; nor any right which doth not alike agree to others.

The Ministers of publique charges in every particular Church ought to be called and appointed to their charges by a lawfull Ecclesiasticall calling, such as hereafter is set downe.

All these for the divers regard of their severall kinds are of equall power amongst themselves.

No man can be lawfully called to publique charge in any Church, but he that is fit to discharge the same. And none is

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to be accounted fit, but he that is endued with the common gifts of all the godly; that is, with faith, and a blamelesse life: And further also, with those that are proper to that Ministry wherein he is to be used, and necessary for the executing of the same; whereupon for triall of those gifts some convenient way and examination is to be used.

The party to be called must first be elected, then he is to be ordained to that charge whereunto he is chosen, by the prayers of that Church whereunto he is to be admitted; the mutual duties of him and of the Church, being before laid open.

The Ministers of the Church are, first they that are Ministers of the word. In their examination it is specially to be taken heed unto, that they be apt to teach, and tryed men, not utterly unlearned, nor newly planted and converted to the faith.

Now these Ministers of the word are, first Pastors, which doe administer the Word and Sacraments, then Teachers, which are occupied in whollsome doctrine.

Besides there are also Elders, which watch over the life and behaviour of every man, and Deacons, which have care over the poore.

Further, in every particular Church there ought to be a Presbytery, which is a Consistory, and as it were a Senate of Elders. Under the name of Elders here are contained they who in the Church minister doctrine, and they who are properly called Elders.

By the common Counsell of the Eldership all things are directed that belong to the state of their Church. First, such as belong to the guidance of the whole body of it in the holy and common assembly gathered together in the name of the Lord, that all things may be done in them duely, orderly, and to edification. 2. Then also such as pertain to particular persons. First, to all the members of that Church, that the
good

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good may enjoy all the priviledges that belong unto them, that the wicked may be corrected with Ecclesiasticall censures according to the quality of the fault, private and publique, by admonishing & by removing either from the Lords Supper by suspension (as it is commonly called) or out of the Church by Excommunication. The which belong specially to the Ministers of publique charge in the Church to their calling either to be begun or ended, and ended either by relieving or punishing them, and that for a time by suspension or altogether by deposition.

For directing of the Eldership let the Pastors be set over it, or if there be no Pastors then one in the same Church, let the Pastors doe it in their turnes.

But yet in all the greater affaires of the Church, as in Excommunicating of any, and in choosing and deposing of Church Ministers, nothing may be concluded without the knowledge and consent of the Church.

Particular Churches ought to yeeld mutuall help one to another, for which cause they are to communicate amongst themselves.

The end of this communicating together is, that all things in them may be so directed both in regard of Doctrine and also of Discipline, as by the Word of God they ought to be.

Therefore the things that belong hereunto are determined by the common opinion of those who meet so to communicate together, and whatsoever is to be amended furthered or procured in any of those severall Churches that belong to that assembly. wherein, albeit no particular Church hath power over another, yet every particular Church of the same resort, meeting and counsell, ought to obey the opinion of more Churches with whom they communicate.

For holding of these meetings and assemblies there are to be

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be chosen by every Church belonging to that assembly; principall men from among the Elders, who are to have their instructions from them, and so to bee sent to the Assembly. There must be also a care had, that the things they shall returne to have been godly agreed on by the meetings, be diligently observed by the Churches.

Further in such assemblies there is also to be chosen one that may be set over the assemblies, who may moderate and direct them. His duty is to see, that the assemblies be held godly, quiet and comely. Therefore it belongeth unto him to begin and end the conference with prayer. to know every mans instructions, to propound in order the things that are to bee handled, to gather their opinions, and to propound what is the opinion of the greater part. It is also the part of the rest of the assembly to speak their opinions of the things propounded godly and quietly.



*The Synodical Discipline gathered out of the Synods
and use of the Churches which have restored it
according to the Word of God, and out of sundry
bookes that are written of the same,
and referred unto certain Heads.*

Of the necessity of a Calling.

LEt no man thrust himselfe into the executing of any part of publique charge in the administration of the Word, Sacraments, Discipline or care over the poore. Neither let any such sue or seek for any publique charge of the Church, but let every one tarry untill hee bee lawfully called.

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*The manner of entring and determining of a Calling and
against a Ministry of no certaine place ; and
the desertion of a Church.*

L Et none be called but unto some certain charge ordained of God, and to the exercising of the same in some particular Congregation. And he that is so called let him be so bound to that---Church that he may not after be of any other, or depart from it without the consent thereof. Let none be called, but they that have first subscribed the confession of Doctrine and Discipline. Whereof let them be admonished to have copies with themselves.

In the examination of Ministers the testimony of the place from whence they come is to be demanded, whereby it may bee understood what life and conversation hee hath been of, and whether he hath been addicted to any Heresie, or to the reading of any hereticall books, or to curious and strange questions and idle speculations ; or rather whether hee be accompted sound and consenting in all things to the Doctrine received in the Church. Whereunto if hee agree, hee is also to expound some part of the holy Scriptures twice or oftner, as it shall seem meet to the examiners, and that before the Conference, and that Church which is interested. Let him also be demanded of the principall heads of Divinity. And whether he will diligently execute and discharge his Ministry, and in the execution thereof propound unto himselfe not his owne desires and commodities, but the glory of God and edification of the Church. Lastly, whether hee will be studious and carefull to maintaine and preserve wholesome Doctrine, and Ecclesiasticall Discipline. Thus let the Minister be examined not onely by one Eldership, but also by some greater meeting and assembly.

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Of Election.

BEfore the Election of a Minister and the deliberation of the Conference concerning the same, let there be a day of Fast kept in the Church interested.

Of the place of exercising this Calling.

Albeit it be lawfull for a Minister upon just occasion to Preach in another Church then that wherof he is Minister, yet none may exercise any ordinary Ministry elsewhere, but for a certaine time upon great occasion, and by the consent of his Church and Conference.

Of the Office of the Ministers of the word, and first of the order of Liturgy, or Common Prayer.

LEt the Minister that is to Preach name a Psalm or a part of a Psalm (beginning with the first, and so proceeding) that may be sung by the Church, noting to them the end of their singing (to wit) the glory of God and their own edification. After the Psalm let a short admonition to the people follow of preparing themselves to pray duly unto God. Then let there be made a Prayer containing a generall confession. First of the guilt of sin both originall and actuall, and of the punishment which is due by the Law for them both. Then also of the promise of the Gospell, and in respect of it supplication of pardon for the said guilt and punishment, and petition of grace promised, as for the duties of the whole life, so especially for the godly expounding and receiving of the Word. Let this petition be concluded with the Lords Prayer. After the Sermon, let Prayer be made againe, First for grace to profit by the doctrine delivered, the principall heads thereof being remembered; then for all men, but chiefly for the universall Church and for all estates and degrees of the people; which is likewise to be ended with the Lords Prayer and the singing of a Psalm as before. Last of all let the Congregation be

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He dismissed, with some convenient forme of blessing taken out of the Scripture, such as is *Numb. 6. 24. 2 Cor. 13. 13.*

Of Preaching.

Let him that shall Preach choose some part of the Canonick Scripture to expound, and not of the *Apocrypha*. Further in his ordinary Ministry, let him not take Possills (as they are called) but some whole booke of the holy Scripture, especially of the new Testament, to expound in order. In choise whereof regard is to be had both of the Ministers ability, and of the edification of the Church.

He that Preacheth must performe two things, the first that his speech bee uncorrupt, which is to be considered both in regard of the Doctrine, that it be holy, sound, wholesome and profitable to edification, not divelish, hereticall, leavened, corrupt, fabulous, curious, or contentious; and also in respect of the manner of it, that it be proper to the place which is handled, that is, which either is contained plainly in the very words; or if it be gathered by consequent, that the same be fit and cleere and such as may rise upon the property of the word, grace of speech and suit of the matter, and not be allegoricall, strange, wrested or far fetched. Now let that which is such, and chiefly which is fittest for the times and occasions of the Church, be delivered. Further let the explication, confirmation, enlargement and application, and the whole Treatise and handling of it be in the vulgar tongue, and let the whole confirmation and prooffe be made by arguments, testimonies and examples taken only out of the holy Scriptures, applied fitly and according to the naturall meaning of the places that are alleadged.

The second thing to be performed by him that preacheth is a reverend gravity: This is considered first in the

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file, phrase and manner of speech, that it be spiritual, pure, proper, simple and applied to the capacity of the people, not such as humane wisdom teacheth, nor favouring of new fangledness, nor either so affectate as it may serve for pompe and ostentation, or so carelesse, and base, as becommeth not Ministers of the Word of God. Secondly, it is also to be regarded as well in ordering the voyce, in which a care must be had that (avoyding the keeping alwayes of one tune) it may be equall, and both rise and fall by degrees; as also in ordering the gesture wherein (the body being upright) the guiding and ordering the whole body is to follow the voyce, there being avoyded in it all unseemly gestures of the head or other parts and often turning of the body to divers sides. Finally let the gesture be grave, modest and seemly, not utterly none, nor too much, neither like the gestures of Playes or Fencers.

These things are to be performed by him that Preacheth, whereby when need requireth they may be examined who are trayned and exercised to be made fit to Preach: Let there be, if it may be, every Sabbath day two Sermons, and let them that preach alwayes endeavour to keepe themselves within one houre, especially on the weekdayes. The use of preaching at Burialls is to be left as it may be done conveniently, because there is danger that they may nourish the superstition, of some, or be abused to pompe and vanity.

Of the Catechisme.

Let the Catechisme be taught in every Church. Let there be two sorts. One more large applied to the delivering of the sum of Religion by a sute and order of certaine places of the Scriptures, according to which some point of the holy Doctrine may be expounded every week. Another of the same sort but shorter, fit for the examinati-

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on of the rude and ignorant before they be admitted to the Lords Supper.

Of the other parts of Liturgy or Divine Service.

ALL the rest of the Liturgy or Divine Service consisteth in the administration of the Sacraments and by the custome of the Church in the blessing of Marriage. The most commodious forme thereof is that which is used by the Churches that have reformed their Discipline according to the Word of God.

Of Sacraments.

LEt onely a Minister of the Word that is a Preacher administer the Sacraments; and that after the preaching of the Word, and not in any other place then in the publique assemblies of the Church.

Of Baptisme.

Women only may not offer unto Baptisme those that are to be baptized, but the Father if it may be, or in his name some other. They which present unto Baptisme ought to be perswaded not to give those that are Baptized the names of God or of Christ, or of Angells or of holy Offices, as of Baptist, Evangelist, &c. nor such as savour of Paganisme or Popery; but chiefly such whereof there are examples in the holy Scriptures in the names of those who are reported in them to have beene godly and vertuous.

Of the Communion.

LEt the time of celebrating the Communion bee made known eight dayes before, that the Congregation may prepare themselves, and that the Elders may do their duty in going to and visiting whom they ought.

Of Signifying their names that are to communicate.

LEt them which before have not beene received to the Lords Table when they first desire to come to it, give their names to the Minister seaven dayes before the Com-

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munition that care of enquiring of them may be committed to the Elders, that if there be any cause of hindrance there may be stay made betime; but if there be no such thing let them proceed (where neede may be) to the examining of their faith before some of the Elders and Ministers every moneth before the Communion. Let this whole Treatise of Discipline be read in the consistory, and let the Ministers, Elders and Deacons be censured one after an other; yet so that the Minister concerning Doctrine be censured of Ministers only.

Let them only be admitted to the Communion that have made confession of their faith, and submitted themselves to the Discipline; unlesse they shall bring letters testimoniall of good credit from some other place, or shall approve themselves by some other sufficient testimonie.

Children are not to be admitted to the Communion before they be of the age of 14 yeares except the consistory shall otherwise determine.

On the Sabbath-day next before the Communion, let mention be made in the Sermon of the examination, wherunto the Apostle exhorteth, and of the peace that is by faith, in the day of the Communion; let there be speech of the Doctrine of the Sacraments, and especially of the Lords Supper.

Of Fasting.

Let the day of Fasting bee published by the Pastor according to the advise of the consistory, either for supplication, for turning away of calamities present or threatened; or for petition of some speciall grace. Let the Sermons upon the same day before and after noone (as on the Lords day) bee such as may bee fit for the present occasion.

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Of Holidiaies.

Holidiaies are conveniently to be abolished.

Of Marriage.

Let espousing goe before marriage. Let the words of espousing be of the present time, and without condition, and before sufficient witnesses on both sides. It is to be wished that the Minister or an Elder be present at the espousals, who having called upon God may admonish both parties of their duties. First, may have care of averoyding the degrees forbidden both by the Law of God and man: and then they may demand of them, whether they be free from any bond of Marriage, which if they professe and be strangers, he may also require sufficient testimony. Further also they are to be demanded, whether they have been married before, and of the death of the party with whom they were married, which if they acknowledge and be strangers he may demand convenient testimony of the death of the other party. Finally, let them be asked if they be under the government of any; whether they whom it concerneth have consented.

The Espousals being done in due order, let them not be dissolved, though both parties should consent. Let the marriage be solemnized within two moneths after. Before the marriage let the promise be published three severall Sabbath daies; but first, let the parties espoused, with their parents or governours desire the publishing thereof of the Minister and two Elders at the least, that they may be demanded of those things that are needfull, and let them require to see the instrument of the covenant of the Marriage, or at least sufficient testimony of the Espousals. Marriage may be solemnized and blessed upon any ordinary day of publique prayer, saving upon a day of Fast.

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Of Schooles.

LEt children be instructed in Schooles; both in other learning, and especially in the Catechisme; that they may repeat it by heart, and understand it; when they are so instructed, let them be brought to the Lords Supper, after they have been examined by the Minister, and allowed by him.

Of Students of Divinity, and their Exercises.

IN every Church where it may conveniently be done, care is to be had that some poore Schollers studious of Divinity being fit for Theologicall exercises, and especially for expounding of holy Scripture, may by the liberality of the godly rich be taught and trained up to preach.

Let that exposition as often as it shall be convenient to be had be in the presence at least of one Minister, by whose presence they may be kept in order, and in the same sort, (as touching the manner of preaching) that publique Sermons are made. Which being ended, let the other students (he being put apart that was Speaker) note wherein he hath failed in any of those things that are to be performed by him that preacheth publicquely, as is set down before. Of whose opinion let the Minister that is present and is moderator of their exercise, judge and admonish the speaker, as he shall thinke meet.

Of Elders.

LEt the Elders know every particular house and person of the Church, that they may enforme the Minister of the condition of every one, and the Deacons of the sicke, and poore, that they may take care to provide for them: they are not to be perpetuall, neither yet easily to be changed.

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Of Consistories.

IN the Consistory the most voices are to be yeelded unto. In it onely Ecclesiasticall things are to be handled. Of them; first they are to be dealt with such as belong to the common direction of the publique assembly, in the order of Liturgy or divine Service, Sermon, Prayers, Sacraments, Mariages, and Burials. Then with such also as pertain to the oversight of every one, and their particular deeds. Further, they are to cause such things as shall be thought meet to be registred and written in a booke. They are also to cause to be written in another booke the names of them that are baptized, with the names of their parents and sureties. Likewise of the Communicants. Further also are to be noted their names that are married, that die, and to whom Letters testimoniall are given.

Of the Censures.

NOne is to be complained of unto the Consistory unlessse first the matter being uttered with silencing the parties name, if it seem meet so to be done by the judgment of the Consistory.

In private and lesse faults the precept of Christ, *Mat. 18.* is to be kept.

Greater and publique offences are to be handled by the Consistory. Further publique offences are to be esteemed, first, such as are done openly before all, or whomsoever, the whole Church knowing of it. Secondly, such as be done in a publique place, albeit few know it. Thirdly, that are made such by pertinacy and contempt. Fourthly, that for the heinousnesse of the offence are to be punished with some grievous civill punishment.

They that are to be excommunicated being in publique charge in the Church, are to be deposed also from their charges. They also are to be discharged that are unfit for
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the Ministry by reason of their ignorance, or of some incurable disease, or by any other such cause, are disabled to performe their Ministry. But in the roomes of such as are disabled by meanes of sicknesse or age, let another be placed without the reproach of him that is discharged; and further, so as the reverence of the Ministry may remaine unto him, and he may be provided for liberally and in good order.

When there is question concerning an heretique, complained of to the Consistory, straight let two or three neighbour Ministers be called, men godly and learned, and free from that suspition, by whose opinion he may be suspended till such time as the Conference may take knowledge of his cause.

The obstinate after admonition by the Consistory, though the fault have not been so great, are to be suspended from the Communion; and if they continue in their obstinacy, this shall be the order to proceed to their Excommunication. Three severall Sabbath daies after the Sermon publicuely let be declared the offence committed by the offender. The first Sabbath let not the offenders name be published. The second let it be declared, and withall a certaine day of the weeke named, to be kept for that cause in fasting and prayer. The third let warning be given of his Excommunicating to follow the next Sabbath after, except there may be shewed some sufficient cause to the contrary: so upon the fourth Sabbath day let the sentence of Excommunication be pronounced against him, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

He that hath committed great offences, opprobrious to the Church, and to be grievously punished by the Magistrates authority, albeit he professe his repentance in words,
yet

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yet for the triall thereof, and to take away the offence, let him for a time be kept from the Communion. Which how often, and how long it is to be done, let the Consistory according to their discretion determine. After which, if the party repent, he is brotherly to be received againe; but not untill he have openly professed his repentance before the Church, by consent whereof he should have been Excommunicated.

If the Ministers of any publique charge of the Church commit any such thing, they are to be deposed from their charge.

Of the assemblies of the Church.

PARTICULAR Churches are to communicate one with another by common meetings and resorts. In them onely Ecclesiasticall matters are to be handled, and of those, onely such as pertaine to the Churches of that resort; concerning other Churches, unlesse they be desired, they are to determine nothing further then to referre such matters to their next common and great meeting.

Let the Order of proceeding in them be this: First, let the survey be taken of those that are present, and the names of those that are absent, and should be there, be noted that they may give a reason at their next meeting of their absence, or be censured by the judgement of the assembly next. Let the acts of the last assembly of that kinde be read, that if any of the same remaine unfinished they may be dispatched. Then let those things be dealt in that are properly belonging to the present assembly. Where first the instructions sent from the Churches are to be delivered by every one in order, as they sit together, with their Letters of credence. Secondly, let the state of the Churches of that resort be considered, to wit, how they are instructed

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and guided. Whether the holy Doctrine and Discipline be taught and exercised in them, and whether the Ministers of publique charges doe their duty, and such like. Furthermore they shall determine of those things that doe appertain to the common state of all the Churches of that resort, or unto any of the same, which way may be sufficient for the oversight of the Churches. Lastly, if it seem meet, the Delegates present may be censured.

They that are to meet in such assemblies are to be chosen by the consent of the Churches of that assembly and conference to whom it may appertain.

Let such onely be chosen that exercise publique function in the Church of Ministry or Eldership, and which have subscribed to the Doctrine and Discipline, and have promised to behave themselves according to the Word of God. Notwithstanding it may be lawfull also to be present for other Elders and other Ministers, and likewise (if the Assembly thinke it meet) for Deacons and for Students in Divinity, especially those that exercise themselves in exounding the holy Scriptures in the Conferences, and be asked their opinion. Which in Students is to this end, that their judgements in handling matters Ecclesiasticall may be both tried and sharpened. But they onely are to give voyce which are chosen by the Churches, and have brought their instructions signed from them.

If there fall out any very waighty matter to be consulted of, let notice of it be given to the Moderator of the Assembly next going before, or to the Minister of that Church where the next meeting is to be. The same is to send word of it in due time to the Minister of every Church of that Assembly, that they may communicate it afore-hand with those to whom it appertaineth, that the Delegates resorting

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to the next meeting may understand and report their judgements.

In appointing of the place for the Assembly regard must be had of the convenient distance, and other commodities that no part may justly complaine that they are burthened above others.

In every such Ecclesiasticall Assembly it is meet there be a Moderator. Hee is to have charge of the Assembly; to see it kept in good order. Hee is alwaies, if it may be conveniently, to be changed. The choise is to be in this manner:

The Moderator of the former Assembly of that kind, or in his absence the Minister of the Church where they meet, having first prayed fitly to that purpose, is to move the Assembly to choose a Moderator. He being chosen is to provide that the things done in the Assembly may be written, that the Delegates of every Church may write them out and communicate them with the Conferences from whence they came.

The Moderator is also by the order and judgement of the Assembly, to give answer either by speech or by Letters, to such as desire any answer, and to execute censures if any be to be executed. Further, he is to procure all things to be done in it godly and quietly, exhorting to meeknesse, moderation of spirit, and forbearing one of another where need shall be, and referring it to the Assembly to take order for such as are obstinate and contentious. Lastly, he is to remember them of the next meeting following, with thanks for their paines, and exhortation to proceed cheerfully in their Callings, and so, courteously to dismisse the Assembly. Before such time none may depart without leave of the Assembly.

Those Assemblies, according to their kinds have greater authority, if they be greater; and lesse, if they be lesse. Therefore (unlesse it be a plaine act, and manifest unto all) if any thinke himselfe injured by the lesse meeting, he may appeale still unto a greater, till he come to a generall Councell, so that hee ascend orderly from the lesse to the next greater. But it is to be understood, that the sentence of the Assemblies be holden firme untill it be otherwise judged by an Assembly of greater authority.

Assemblies or meetings are either

Conferences or Synods.

Conferences are the meetings of the Elders of a few Churches, as for example, of twelve. There are to meet in a Conference chosen by the Eldership of every particular Church, one Minister, and one Elder. The Conferences are to be kept once in six weeks.

They are specially to looke into the state of the Churches of that resort and Conference: Examining particularly these severall points. Whether all things be done in them according to the holy Doctrine and Discipline of the Gospel, (to wit) whether any questions be moved concerning any point of Doctrine. Whether the Ecclesiasticall Discipline be duely observed. Whether any Minister be wanting in any of those Churches, that a sufficient one in due time may be procured. Whether the other Ministers of publique charge in the Church be appointed in every Congregation. Whether care be had of Schooles, and for the poore. Finally, they are to be demanded wherein any of them needeth the advice of the Conference, for the advancement of the Gospel amongst them.

Before

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Before the end of the meeting, if it shall be so thought good by them, let one of the Ministers assembled in Conference either chosen by voyce, or taking it by turn, Preach publicquely. Of his Speech let the rest judge among themselves (the Elders being put apart) and admonish him brotherly, if there be any cause, examining all things according to those Rules that are before declared in the Chapter, concerning the things that are to be performed by those that preach.

Of Synods.

A Synod is the meeting of chosen men of many Conferences. In them let the whole Treatise of Discipline be read. In them also (other things first being finished as was said before) let all those that are present be censured (if it may be done conveniently) and let them also have a communion in, and with the Church where they were called.

There are two sorts of Synods, the first is particular, which comprehendeth both the Provinciall and Nationall Synod. A Provinciall Synod is the meeting of the chosen Men of every Conference, within the Province. A Province containeth foure and twenty conferences.

A fit way to call a provincially councell may be this, The care thereof (except themselves will determine of it) may be committed to the particular Eldership of some conference within the Province, which by advise of the same conference may appoint the place and time for the meeting of the Provinciall Synod.

To that Church or Eldership are to be sent the matters that seemed to the particular conferences more difficult for them

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them to take order in, and such as belong to the Churches of the whole Province, which is to be done diligently, and in good time, that the same may in due season give notice of the place and time of the Synod, and of the matters to be debated therein, that they which shall be sent may come the better prepared and judge of them according to the advise of the Conferences.

Two Ministers and as many Elders are to be sent from every Conference unto the Provinciaall Synod. The same is to be held every halfe yeare or oftner till the Discipline be settled. It is to be held three moneths before every nationall Synod, that they may prepare and make ready those things that pertaine to the Nationall. The acts of the Provinciaall Synod are to be sent unto the Nationall, by the Eldership of that Church in which it was holden, and every Minister is to be furnished with a Copy of them, and with the reasons of the same. A Nationall Synod or convocation is a meeting of the chosen men of every Province, within the Domirion of the same Nation and civill government. The way to call it (unlesse it shall determine otherwise) may be the same with the Provinciaall, that is, by the Eldership of some particular Church, which shall appoint the time and place of the next Nationall Convocation; but not otherwise then by the advise of their Provinciaall Synod.

Out of every Provinciaall Synod there are to bee chosen three Ministers, and as many Elders to bee sent to the Nationall. They are to handle the things pertaining to the Churches of the whole Nation or Kingdome, as the Doctrine, Discipline, Ceremonies, things not decided by inferiour meetings, appeales and such like. By the order of the same, one is to bee appointed which may gather

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gather into one booke the Notes of every particular Church.

Thus much for particular meetings, the universall followeth, which is called a generall, or oecumenicall councill, which is a meeting of the chosen men of every Nationall Synod. The acts of all such councells are to be registred and reported in a booke.

The Discipline intituled the Discipline of the Church described in the Word of God, as farre as we can judge, is taken, and drawne from the most pure Fountaine of the Word of God, and containeth in it the Discipline of the Church that is necessary, essentiall and common to all ages of the Church.

The Synodicall also adjoynd as it resteth upon the same foundations is likewise necessary and perpetuall, But as farre as it is not expresly, confirmed by Authority of the holy Scripture, but is applied to the use and times of the Church as their divers states may require, according to the Analogy and generall Rules of the same Scripture, is to bee judged profitable for the Churches that receive it, but may bee changed in such things as belong not to the essence of the Discipline upon a like godly reason, as the divers estates of the Church may require.

The forme of the Subscription.

THe Brethren of the conference of N. whose names are here under written have subscribed this discipline after this manner. This Discipline wee allow as a godly Discipline, and agreeable to the Word of God, (yet so as wee may be first satisfied in the things hereunder noted) and desire the same so acknowledged by us, to be furthered by all lawfull meanes, that by publique authority

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city of the Magistrate, and of our Church it may be established.

Which thing, if it may be obtained of Her right Excellent Majesty, and other the Magistrates of this Kingdome, we promise that we will doe nothing against it whereby the publique peace of the Church may be troubled. In the meane time we promise to observe it so far as it may be lawfull for us so to doe, by the publique Lawes of this Kingdome, and by the Peace of our Church.

FINIS.